

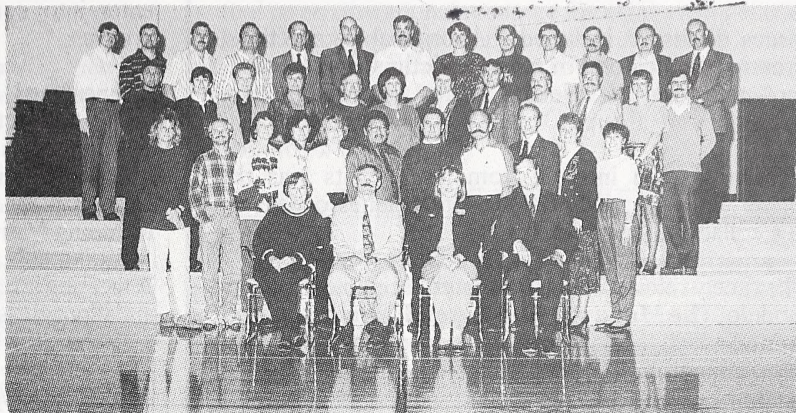


# Family Violence Newsletter

JUN 30 1995

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## Family Violence Course for Police and Prosecutors - Train the Trainers

In the first course designed to bring prosecutors and police together for family violence training, 40 representatives from across Alberta attended the Alberta Justice Staff College in Edmonton from September 22 - 24, 1993. The mandate for those participating was to provide training or act as designated family violence representatives within the criminal justice system. Delegates included police trainers, Crown Attorneys and Victim Service representatives. In previous years, the course had been designed for police trainers only.

One of the key findings was the participants' sense of a need for better communication and collaboration among the criminal justice system - some comments included - "... provided new insight into victims' perspective .. good ideas came out of group discussion ... most important part was expressing our views with the prosecutors ..., an entirely new area of concern and action has been brought to my attention".

"... in order to combat family violence, all aspects of the justice system must work together and I am pleased to see that we have started in our own back yard".

- Neil McCrank, Deputy Minister of Justice  
 and Deputy Attorney General

As many jurisdictions become more involved with criminal justice training issues, it is clear that in order to effectively assist victims of this crime, all elements of the system must work together.

Mr. Neil McCrank, Deputy Minister of Justice and Deputy Attorney General, in his opening address to the course participants, stated, "This is the first year police and prosecutors will receive provincial training together and it reflects the mandate undertaken when the Departments of the Attorney and Solicitor General combined to form the Department of

## Message from the Editor

*The Family Violence Newsletter - FVN - is published bi-annually (April and October) by Alberta Justice. FVN focuses on all three components of criminal justice - police, the courts and corrections - in reflection of the newly amalgamated Department of Justice.*

*FVN welcomes the participation of all police, court and correctional services throughout the province. Articles should be submitted to:*

**The Editor**  
 Gloria Ohrt, Manager  
 Prevention Programs  
 Public Security Division  
 Alberta Justice  
 10th Floor, 10365 - 97 Street  
 Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3W7  
 Tel: (403) 427-3457  
 Fax: (403) 427-5916

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**Alberta**  
 JUSTICE



Justice. We know that the criminal justice system has not always been well designed to handle the complexity of domestic assault cases - in order to combat family violence, **all** aspects of the justice system must work together. I am pleased to see that we have started in our own back yard".

Issues discussed included: Aboriginal perspectives, firearms, indicators of abuse, victims' perspective, sentencing and interviewing issues and child welfare issues.

Receiving keen interest from participants was the interdisciplinary collaboration and techniques for delivery in a collaborative manner.

The timely release of the new interdisciplinary training module, **The Mountain and Beyond**, formed the basis around which the course was designed - In learning our own strengths and recognizing our weaknesses, it becomes easier to reach out and work together.

### ***The Gatekeeper - Finding New Ways to Help Victims in Lethbridge***

Setting up an integrated, community-based network to deal with family violence has become a goal for the Lethbridge area.

Chief Crown Prosecutor, Jim Langston, says the traditional methods of "cops, courts and corrections" are not necessarily the most efficient manner to deal with family violence.

His ultimate goal is to see the creation of "a gatekeeper" whose duties would include referring victims to the appropriate social or counselling agencies, follow up calls and touching base with police and prosecutors to track the status of each file.

"This type of resource would free up both the police and the prosecution," Langston explains. "It would also help ensure that victims aren't wandering around lost and not finding the proper resources to help them. We should be emphasizing curing, not just punishing."

Mr. Langston points out that the gatekeeper concept, while relatively new in most justice circles, has long been a part of Native culture. "The concept of a whole family getting help, not just the victim, is something we (non-Natives) can learn from Native culture," he explains.

Other initiatives are underway in the Lethbridge area aimed at creating a more global, harmonized approach to family violence. One of the most noticeable changes has been in the field of sentencing. "We'll generally adjourn for six to eight weeks, sometimes more, before the plea," Langston explains. "At that time, both parties enter into counselling, and we keep tabs on their progress."

Counselling is offered not only for the accused batterer, but for the victim as well. "Counselling not only helps the victim decide who she is and what her needs are, but it helps her decide if she wants to stay in the relationship," he explains. A variety of therapy services are used, including Native counselling.

A meeting is then scheduled with the Crown Prosecutor and if progress is being made, then a lighter sentence or a discharge is recommended.

The probation/counselling offer operates as "the carrot" to get both victims and accused parties in touch with the proper networks to actually deal with their problems. Mr. Langston is quick to point out that the purpose is "not to keep the family together at all costs." Rather, the bigger goal is to "stop the woman from choosing another abuser, and stop the man from beating someone else."

Acknowledging that the concept is somewhat experimental, the University of Lethbridge is monitoring the program to determine its effectiveness. However, Langston is optimistic that these early efforts will lead to a more effective way to deal with domestic violence as a whole.

### ***'A Change in Attitude' - Edmonton Community Corrections***

A 10-week Family Violence Prevention Course was held at the South Edmonton Community Corrections office from June 2, 1993 to August 4, 1993 for clients on probation with a history of domestic violence. Ten participants attended classes dealing with stress and relaxation, the cycle of violence, use of time out, active listening and coping with problem solving.

"I saw a definite change of attitude in the participants ...

the group was definitely worthwhile."

Paul Duteau, Probation Officer

Organizers were fortunate in having Dana Stokowski, of the Y.M.C.A., and Tom Wood, a volunteer Probation Officer, assist during the program. Many participants



had their spouses attend the sessions as well. In reviewing evaluations, most clients indicated they could apply the information learned to daily living outside the group.

A second 10-week course was scheduled to commence in September, 1993.

**Note to the Reader:** Similar programs facilitated by Probation Officers Karen Walroth in Calgary and Dave Shirley in Lethbridge have been scheduled.

*Submitted by Paul Duteau, Probation Officer  
Edmonton South Community Corrections*

### **Good Things Can Still Happen Interactive Package for Sexually Abused Children**

This 22-minute animation video and 32-page User's Guide is available from the National Film Board of Canada for therapists and other professionals working with sexually abused children. It is intended for children ages 6 to 12 who have already disclosed abuse.

The film's target audience is children, and it helps them acknowledge and talk about their feelings, and move towards the future with a sense of hope and



empowerment. The secondary audience - police, social workers, family members, etc. - will also find the film invaluable in helping them understand and be sensitive to the inner world of the abused child.

**Good Things Can Still Happen** is not a prevention tool or an educational resource for children in general. It is not meant to be used in a classroom setting. It is more appropriate in the safety of one-to-one and small group situations. The video is available for loan from the National Film Board of Canada in Edmonton 495-3010/3013.

### **Armour - New Dating Violence Drama**

Trying to discuss family violence with teen-agers can be a challenging experience. Peer pressure, confusion, fear of taboo subjects and distrust of authority can combine to present a barrier to effective communication.

In an attempt to address this, Azimuth Theatre, a group dedicated to presenting socially-oriented theatre, has prepared a play targeted for teen-agers. Called **Armour**, it incorporates strong visual images as well as drama and discussion.

"It's a difficult subject so we're going to use lots of imagery and movement to keep their attention fixed on the stage," explains playwright Brian Marler.

The play chronicles the different phases of a teen-age relationship as it degenerates into violence. The story features the couple as well as a friend of the young woman, who watches the relationship change and wonders what she can do.

Marler points out that a great deal of research goes into all of Azimuth's plays. "We have to read through statistics, reports and research material so that we are up to date for the discussion groups after the play," he says. After each performance the actors, as well as guests from the social services sector, lead group discussions.

The play will be presented to community groups and schools throughout Alberta during October and November of 1993.

If you are interested in hosting a performance of **Armour** or if you would like more information about Azimuth Theatre, contact Deborah Hurford-Simcoe or Binaifer Kapadia at 448-9165.



## **Lethbridge RCMP Family Violence Training**

Family violence awareness and training has been undergoing an expansion at the Lethbridge RCMP subdivision. Over half of their police personnel have undergone family violence training and the remaining staff are expected to attend courses by early 1994.

The subdivision recently hosted a two-day family violence training session entitled "Family Violence - A Community Policing Concern." Among the speakers were representatives from corrections' facilities, the Crown Prosecutor's office and local native bands. In addition, workshops addressing concerns of children, adult survivors of abuse, and battered women were also held.

A workshop focusing on child abuse is also planned for November 24 - 26, 1993. Co-sponsored by the RCMP and Alberta Family and Social Services, the interagency workshop will include speakers from both agencies, as well as child welfare experts and other social service workers.

Cpl. Geoff Elliott, Community Policing/Victims Services Coordinator for the Lethbridge RCMP Subdivision, says the family violence initiatives are running smoothly and the programs have received favourable responses from staff and the public.

Several other family violence initiatives have taken place in the past year, including two three-and-a-half day training sessions in April. These sessions were attended by both RCMP members and military police from nearby CFB Suffield. In addition, 38 police officers from Medicine Hat, Taber, Coaldale and Lethbridge, as well as 15 social service workers, attended a family violence workshop February 26, 1993.

### **"NEW RESOURCES" *The Mountain and Beyond* New Training Resource Kit Available**

Dealing with domestic violence at a more global, community level is addressed in a new interdisciplinary project called "The Mountain and Beyond."

The resource kit contains a video entitled "Beginning With Us," a video guide, a reference and planning workbook and lists of people and community groups across the country who have begun to implement parts of the program's recommendations.

The video chronicles the experiences of a group of social service professionals from across Canada, including a police officer, a social worker, a Crown Prosecutor, a therapist and a school principal. They attempt to deal with their misconceptions and frustrations regarding each other, with the goal of working together as a team to combat family violence.

The kit was piloted at the Alberta Justice Staff College during the Criminal Justice Family Violence Course held for prosecutors and police trainers from September 22 - 24, 1993 (see front-page article).

For more information, contact the Office for the Prevention of Family Violence at 422-5916 or contact the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence at 1-800-267-1291.

A copy of the kit is available for loan to police services and Alberta Justice staff by contacting the Law Enforcement Film Library at 427-3457.

## **Family Violence Prevention Month - OPFV 1993 Kit Available**



The Office for the Prevention of Family Violence (OPFV) has announced that the Minister of Family and Social Services will designate November as Family Violence Prevention Month.

To assist communities with initiatives, a kit has been prepared. OPFV has developed educational materials for groups of people for whom information on family violence was difficult to find.

In addition to existing material for immigrant women, material has been developed for people with disabilities, First Nation and Metis peoples and seniors.



The overall theme for 1993 is:

### ***Coming Together to Prevent Family Violence***

Materials in this year's kit include:

- poster for aboriginal communities
- brochures for First Nations and Metis peoples
- poster and bookmark for seniors
- brochure for people with disabilities
- articles on elder abuse, immigrant women, etc.



To get involved in planning activities in your community, order one of OPFV's kits by contacting them at 422-5916 (telephone) or 427-2039 (fax).

### ***Community Corrections Staff Calgary Awareness Training***

In June 1993, two family violence workshops were held for Correctional Services' staff in Calgary. These were developed, organized and facilitated by Karen Walroth, Probation Officer, Calgary, and Charlene Douglas, Parole Officer, Calgary.

Staff from the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society and the Spirit Healing Lodge on the Tsuu T'ina Reserve were also invited to attend. Approximately 50 people participated.

The workshop included the video, *Family Ties - A Different Story*, which provided an overview of wife battering. Karen Walroth gave a presentation on the myths and realities of wife abuse, provided definitions of abuse, described the cycle of violence and discussed the effects of violence on the perpetrator, the victim and the children.

Frank McGrath, Men's Crisis Therapist, Calgary Women's Emergency Shelter, gave a presentation on men's treatment and Melanie Johansen, Counsellor, Y.W.C.A., Support Centre for Domestic Abuse, provided an overview of their program.

The video, *The Crown Prince*, was viewed and discussed as well as the intergenerational transfer of violent behaviour.

The Program Manager from the Sheriff King Home made a presentation on the programs offered through the shelters and led a discussion on how to improve communication between the shelters and Correctional Services' staff.

A family violence resource manual and information package was presented to all participants.

*Submitted by Karen Walroth  
Family Violence Coordinator  
Calgary South Community Corrections*

### ***Bill C-126 - Family Violence Bill Receives Royal Assent***

On August 1, 1993, Bill C-126 was proclaimed. The Bill, commonly referred to as the "Family Violence Bill" or the "Stalking Bill", was previously reported on in the Spring 1993 issue of FVN.

Highlights of the Bill include:

- New offence of criminal harassment ("stalking")
- New bail conditions available in family violence cases. Husband and wife can now be charged with conspiring
- New child abduction provisions
- New provisions for prohibiting access to children by convicted sex offenders. Abolition of the jury direction that it is dangerous in convicting on uncorroborated evidence of a child
- Prohibition on cross-examination of child complainant by the accused personally
- Permission for support person to be in court while child testifies
- Better test for exclusion of the public when a child is testifying

### ***Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police New Family Violence Reports***

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police (CACP) released a number of reports at the 88th Annual Conference of CACP in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Reports were:

(continued on back page)



(CACP continued)

- **A Consultation Report on Police and Justice System Responses to Family Violence (June 1993)**

This working paper outlines the results of a consultation meeting involving 23 participants from across Canada. Three main issues were addressed:

- 1) key family violence problems
- 2) shared ownership and responsibility of problems
- 3) strategies that might provide solutions

- **Police Training and Family Violence (June 1993)**

This document summarizes a workshop of police trainers from across the country. Principle findings were:

- Need for interagency cooperation
- Cultural differences in reporting crimes
- Court orientation
- Stress management
- Attitudes towards victims
- Familiarity with legal issues, **Criminal Code** and provincial legislation

- **Responding to Family Violence (August 1993): A Challenge to Police Management**

This document summarizes the findings of a three-day workshop held at the Canadian Police College in June 1993 that included senior police managers, crown attorneys, members of the judiciary and experts in the field of family violence from across Canada.

- **Family Violence - Women, Children, Seniors and Persons with Disabilities (August 1993) An Annotated Bibliography for Police**

A comprehensive literature review of family violence (since 1977) relative to policing needs. The research, thoughts, opinions and strategies of some of the leading family violence professionals in North America. In addition, the report reviews available film and video collections, as well as identifying key personnel across Canada.

## **City of Calgary Offers MATCH Solutions Funding**

The City of Calgary offers a matching fund for family violence programs three times a year. MATCH-Solutions (Mayor's Action to Create Healthy Solutions to Family Violence) proposals must include a community consultation component. All requests are reviewed by the Standing Policy Committee on Community Services and Calgary City Council.

The next deadline is the end of February 28, 1994. Information can be obtained from S.E. Blakely, City of Calgary Social Services Department at 268-5158.

*Note: This funding is only available for City of Calgary applicants.*

## **Educational Project Funding - Office for the Prevention of Family Violence**

If you want to increase your community's awareness of family violence and/or improve the knowledge or skills of those in your community working with individuals affected by family violence, funding is available for small scale educational initiatives and a limited number of large scale educational projects.

- small scale = maximum of \$3,000
- large scale = maximum of \$20,000

The purpose of the project must be to prevent violence in families or reduce the likelihood of recurrence.

### **Priority will be given to proposals which:**

- involve a number of organizations in a joint venture
- demonstrate innovation and creativity

**Application deadline:** December 1, 1993

For applications, or more information, telephone The Office for the Prevention of Family Violence at 422-5916.

## **THANK YOU TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS**

A special note of thanks goes out to Elaine Evans, a law student from Montreal on the Quebec/Alberta Exchange Program, who assisted in researching and writing a number of articles for this volume of FVN - Merci Beaucoup, Elaine!

Jim Langston  
Chief Crown Prosecutor  
Lethbridge  
Alberta Justice

Cpl. Geoff Elliott  
Community Police/Victim  
Services Coordinator  
Lethbridge RCMP Subdivision

Deborah Hurford-Simcoe (Executive  
Director) & Brian Marler (Playwright)  
Azimuth Theatre

Karen Walroth  
Probation Officer, Calgary  
Alberta Justice

Paul Duteau